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ABSTRACT

Data spanning the nine year life of a culturally-oriented field project sponsored by Indiana University indicated the feasibility and productive impact of intensive teacher preparation experiences in a cultural community (Native American) where the trainee (Anglo) functioned in the role of a minority person. For 9 consecutive years, 291 preservice teachers completed on-campus cultural preparation through seminars, workshops, films, readings, and interviews, then served for 17 weeks as student teachers and dormitory volunteer workers in Bureau of Indian Affairs schools in isolated Navajo and Hopi communities and submitted attitudinal and cultural implications reports each two weeks. Participants were predominantly Anglo female education majors from mainstream Anglo communities and public schools. Project participants reported to placement sites friendless and somewhat apprehensive. They departed having several close Native American friends and highly pleased with the experience. Native Americans at each site taught pedagogy, culture, adaption skills, ethnic understanding, and human commonalities. Native American educators reported that young teachers who were immersed in the local culture made culturally-oriented adjustments in their teaching strategies and style. Followup data indicated that teachers culturally prepared on Indian reservations were highly employable both in Native American settings and in mainstream settings. (CM)

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Native Americans as Teacher Trainers: Anatomy and Outcomes of a Cultural Immersion Project

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Objectives:

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education in its "standards" paper (1977) states that:

> Provision should be made for instruction in multicultural education in teacher education programs. Multicultural education should receive attention in courses, seminars, directed readings, laboratory and clinical experiences, practica, and other types of field experiences.

Meanwhile, Native American history, values and national contributions are largely ignored in both public school and teacher preparation curricula. Stereotyping of Native Americans remains too common at all levels of schooling (Banks, 1979). Saville-Troike (1978) points out that, with the consent of community members, cultural training of teachers should include trips into the students' home area, observation and interaction, and participation in community activities. Toelken (1976) sensitively describes Navajo culture and emphasizes how much there is to be learned if one discovers how to look at the Navajo world while living amongst the Navajo. More education majors need experiences living within a minority community, seeing things as minorities see them, sharing in locally valued activities, and coming to understand minority aspirations. It is the author's opinion that teachers could benefit if some of their teacher preparation was received directly from representatives of ethnic minority groups.

The purpose of this paper is to outline briefly specific components of a replicable teacher training project featuring intensive immersion of student teachers in Navajo and Hopi cultures and to cite research on project outcome variables. It is intended that the presentation will: (a) indicate that teacher preparation institutions and Native American educators can successfully collaborate in the year-by-year preparation of preservice teachers; (b) reveal that there are many education majors willing to prepare for, and then successfully teach in, relatively isolated Native American communities; (c) indicate that schools for Native American youth and preservice teachers assigned to those schools both benefit immensely through cultural immersion teacher preparation; (d) encourage Native American educators to approach teacher training institutions to request structured teacher training projects in schools serving Native American youth; and (e) motivate and assist other teacher preparation institutions to develop and implement "hard money" financed teacher preparation efforts in collaboration with Native American communities and schools.

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This paper does not represent a single, carefully designed research study. Rather it presents diverse data, trends, and findings spanning the nine year life of a successful, culturally oriented field project. Few collaborative teacher training projects involving universities and Native American schools exist. This Indiana University sponsored project has been highly valued by preservice teachers, inservice teachers, principals, and university educators. Project outcomes have been consistently positive. It seems important to document the influence of Native American people and schools upon the professional development of approximately three hundred education majors. The collection of seemingly disparate results that follow have one thing in common -- they testify for the feasibility and/or productive impact of intensive teacher preparation experiences in a cultural community where the trainee must function in the role of a minority person.

Perspectives

Hilliard (1974, p. 50) states that "Attitudes and values do not develop instantaneously. It is necessary that teacher education programs provide for early, guided, cross-cultural contact beginning in the first years of college and extending throughout the program." Similarly, Sullivan (1974, p. 68) while discussing components of multicultural education emphasizes that " . . . we must attempt to provide for schools and the community as the extended university classroom." It is not enough for students to take a few language courses and a culture course, but as Hilliard indicates (1974, p. 52), "It is the interactions themselves which provide grist for learning." Teacher training institutions are slow to provide for field based interactive grist. Trainees often are members of homogeneous, "mainstream" groups, which are not scheduled for field experiences in minority communities. Teacher training officials cite lack of funds, lack of student interest, lack of multiculturally trained faculty members, and lack of nearby minority communities as impediments to teacher training projects in minority settings. Clark (1977) points out that preparation program modification along with faculty retraining are feasible steps toward improved multicultural teacher preparation -- at least in the nation's larger institutions. The research findings that follow should encourage teacher educators whose graduates are likely to be teaching ethnic minority groups to structure special projects to prepare more relevantly those graduates for those positions.

Methods

For nine consecutive years a total of 291 preservice teachers (predominately Anglo) have completed on-campus cultural preparation through seminars, workshops, films, readings, and interviews. They have then served as student teachers and dormitory volunteer workers for seventeen weeks in Bureau of Indian Affairs schools educating Navajo and Hopi youth. All participants have participated in Native American cultural events, made Native American friends, and submitted structured reports linking their cultural learnings to their own teaching behaviors and strategies. Employment surveys,

selected attitudinal scales, and cultural involvement records have been completed during each field semester by the preservice trainees. In addition to full day teaching duties, the project participants have been required to spend twenty-five hours per each two week period working with Native American adults or sharing in some of the local community undertakings.

Native American teachers, principals, instructional supervisors, dormitory staff members, and teacher aides have all supervised, assisted, counseled, and evaluated these preservice teachers in professional and social activities. Project participants have reported to placement sites friendless and somewhat apprehensive. They depart seventeen weeks later possessing several close Native American friends and highly pleased with the total experience. Obviously, the Native Americans at each site have been effective teacher trainers. They have taught pedagogy, culture, adaption skills, ethnic understanding, and human commonalities.

Data Source

Two hundred ninety-one preservice teachers serving for seventeen weeks in isolated Native American communities, and submitting attitudinal and cultural implications reports each two weeks, are the major sources of data. The Educational Preference Scale, the Ulibarri/Centrone Scale, the Comprehensive Teaching Employment Survey Form, and the Reflections on Cultural Pluralistic Experiences Form have been utilized systematically as data gatherers. Several of these scales have been administered prior to student teaching and again after student teaching to identify attitudinal shifts. Various statistical techniques (T-tests, Chi square, Pearson product-moment correlations, arithmetic means, and percentages) have been utilized depending upon the nature of the data and the question addressed.

Project Anatomy

Project participants can be characterized as predominately Anglo, female, education majors from mainstream Anglo communities and public schools. As Table I reveals, they are able to persevere in a Reservation environment. Only 3% of all enrollees have been unable to complete the entire 17-week assignment.

Table I. Project Participant Completion Record

Year	Enrolled	Withdrew	Completed	Non-Caucasian
1980-81	47	0	47	1
1979-80	54	0	54	3
1978-79	47	0	47	
1977-78	28	1	27	
1976-77	16	0	16	
1975-76	25	3	22	
1974-75	25	1	24	
1973-74	32	2	30	1
1972-73	26	2	24	
	300	9	291	5

Note: Participants were/are seekers of elementary or secondary or special education teaching licenses. The project is open to any type of teaching certificate candidates.

The American Indian Reservation Project is not merely a "go there to live and survive" experience. Table II accents the academic preparation required before participants report to a Native American community. This preparation focuses on cultural values of Native Americans and educational, social, economic, and historical conditions germane to the group to be served by the student teachers. No doubt the required preparation serves as a screening mechanism -- eliminating less interested students and maximizing the probability of site success for the most committed students.

Table II. Major Project Requirements

Activity	Time Frame	Comments
. Apply to join	2-3 semesters prior to field duty	open to any type of education major and to students from other universities
. Complete readings	by semester prior to field duty	2 books, 28 articles
. Evening seminars	for 2-3 semesters prior to field duty	3 per semester
. Interview over readings	by semester prior to field duty	1-2 with faculty
. 4-day preparatory workshop	each May for next academic year (27 instructional hours)	Native Americans as workshop instructors
. Film & filmstrip viewing	for 2-3 semesters prior to field duty	done in seminars and workshop
. Student teaching	about 8/22 to 12/19 or about 1/5 to 5/2	full day & continuous
. Reside on school site	same as student teaching dates	living done on school campus, no commuting
. Supplementary dormitory & community work/involvement	same as student teaching dates	at least 25 hours per 2 week period
. Cultural synthesis reports	submitted every two weeks during site duty	accent cultural learnings & teaching implications
. 3 evaluations of teaching	5th, 10th, 15th week while on duty	done by supervising teacher
. 4 evaluations of teaching	3rd, 7th, 11th, 15th week while on duty	done by external supervisor
. 7 self-evaluations of teaching	3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th, 11th, 15th week while on duty	done by each student teacher
. site visit by university faculty	in first 3-4 weeks of each field experience	assess the placement, teaching performance, dormitory involvement
. survey/scale completion	pre-student teaching and post-student teaching	to assess evaluative reactions, attitudinal change, etc.

Note: Participants must spend at least 12 hours per week working with, and for, Native Americans in dormitory programs, agency offices, or community undertakings. This insures non-school contact with youth and adults and demands adaptation to the "ways of doing things" in the given community.

Outcomes

Various scales and surveys have been utilized annually in the American Indian Reservation Project to document important trends and to undergird project modifications. Findings that should be of interest to educators engaged in Indian Education and to professors engaged in teacher preparation follow.

A. Employment Success of Project Participants:[1] A comparison study of the employment success of 78 culturally placed student teachers and 655 conventionally placed student teachers revealed 83% success for the cultural group and only 52% success for the conventional group ($X = 22.1$, $p < .001$). The odds were 2:1 that the culturally prepared graduates would get exactly the kind of teaching position they desired as compared to only 1:2 odds for conventionally prepared graduates. For the past two years employment success of the American Indian Project group has increased to over 90%. Approximately 40% of the teaching contract winners accept employment in schools enrolling Navajo or Hopi youth. Project participation has enhanced employability wherever the participant seeks a contract.

B. Acceptance of the Student Teachers by School Principals: Twenty principals of Navajo and Hopi schools, at the end of each of two consecutive student teacher placement years, agreed with the following evaluative statements to the average degree indicated, utilizing a "five-point" Likert scale with "5" being the optimum score (40 responses to teach stem):

   - the student teachers successfully adapted to the new cultural setting (4.5).
   - the student teachers were prepared for the cultural setting prior to arrival (4.0).
   - the student teachers were well accepted by their pupils (4.3).
   - the student teachers were well accepted by Native American adults (4.4).
   - the student teachers learned from Native American adults and children (4.7).
   - a full semester student teaching placement in a Native American setting is most desirable for the school (4.7).

   These mean scores indicate that education majors can earn acceptance from school administrators in ethnic minority schools and communities which are culturally very different from "back home."

C. Supervising Teacher Evaluation of Student Teacher: Three times per semester each supervising teacher who accepts a student teacher into a Navajo or Hopi classroom utilizes an observation form in order to rate the student teacher on thirty-seven "teaching skills." A seven-point Likert scale, with a "7" representing the optimum score, accompanies each item. Over a nine year period approximately 800 supervising teacher responses to each rating item have been averaged.

Selected evaluative items and their mean scores follow.

- participant ability to display empathy for, and understanding of, local pupils (5.93).
- participant demonstration of knowledge of local pupils (5.93).
- participant demonstration of knowledge of local culture and values (5.67).
- participant incorporation of local culture and values into daily instruction (5.93).
- participant decoration of classroom so that it reflects cultural pluralism (5.04).
- participant ability to examine and clarify local cultural values and customs (5.76).
- continuous participant effort to learn more about the local culture (6.43).
- participant ability to communicate with community parents and other adults (5.96).
- participant inclusion of human commonalities in instruction (6.10).
- participant is sensitive to, and builds upon, the ability of each pupil (5.76).
- participant shows skill in working with total class of pupils (5.66).
- participant maintains a professional relationship with pupils (6.00).

Supervising teachers are very positive about the professional contributions of their student teachers. Formal evaluations written at the end of the semester for employment placement files are equally positive.

D. Student Teacher Evaluation of Required Cultural/Community Involvement: Eight times (biweekly) during the field semester each student teacher responds via a seven-point Likert scale to cultural involvement outside of the teaching day. The mean scores that follow ("7" being optimum) are based on over 2,000 responses per each item submitted since the 1972-73 academic year.

- the general value of the cultural/community experiences (6.51).
- the application of cultural/community learnings to classroom teaching (5.96).
- contributions of cultural/community experiences to cultural understanding (6.52).
- contribution of cultural/community experiences to development of friendships with Native Americans (6.41).
- degree to which the cultural/community involvement is enjoyed by the participant (6.62).
- degree participant feels accepted and wanted in the Native American community (5.92).
- degree to which the cultural/community involvement facilitates culturally pluralistic teaching (6.24).

Native Americans are the key instructors in this component of the project. Boarding school dormitory programs, art fairs, recreation nights, ceremonial dances, rug auctions, etc. are conducted by the local citizens. When education majors attend or assist in these activities, they obviously have to model their performance and behavior upon Indians. The data suggest that the student teachers find the things they learn from their Native American teachers to be valuable, satisfying, and conducive to better classroom teaching.

E. Student Teacher Adjectival Evaluation of Selected Project Components: Each participant generates three descriptive adjectives biweekly relative to selected project components. More than 6000 adjectives have been classified as "positive" or "negative" over a nine year period for each of the project components that follow. These longitudinal trends basically are favorable and encouraging over the years as the summated percentages of positive and negative adjectives indicate.

. instructional work	= + 80%	. . .	only 20% negative
. relations with pupils	= + 84%	. . .	only 16% negative
. relations with Indian adults	= + 87%	. . .	only 13% negative
. relations with supervising teacher	= + 92%	. . .	only 8% negative
. geographical area (AZ., N.M.)	= + 82%	. . .	only 18% negative
. social life	= + 86%	. . .	only 14% negative
. living conditions	= + 75%	. . .	25% negative
. cultural involvement	= + 88%	. . .	only 12% negative
. school policies	= + 42%	. . .	58% negative

This adjectival data suggests that if education majors can be moved out of mainstream settings and into culturally different settings they will react positively to student teaching work, social interactions, and their new role as the "minority person in town." It should also be noted that each student teacher has reported the development of very close friendships with an average of 5.5 Native Americans per 17-week semester over the past four years. No student teachers claimed any Native American friends before they departed for their Reservation placement sites. The "friends made" average has climbed significantly over the past four years as the community/dormitory involvement component of the project has been more heavily emphasized and monitored.

F. Educational Orientations of Student Teachers Accepting Placements in Native American Settings:[2] The Educational Preference Scale was administered to 44 American Indian Reservation Project participants and to a control group of 39 conventional student teachers both prior to and after the field experience. Supervising teachers in the Indian schools and in the conventional schools also completed the Educational Preference Scale. The Reservation supervising teachers and the conventional supervising teachers were quite similar and conservative in their initial educational preferences -- a somewhat unexpected finding. The Reservation student teachers and the conventional student teachers were more liberal in their educational preferences than the two groups of supervising teachers. The Reservation student teachers lost some of their liberalism during the 17-week experience in Navajo and Hopi schools. However, they completed the experience still more progressive than their supervising teachers (more liberal on 18 out of 30 EPS items), more progressive than their conventional program counterparts, and more liberal than the supervising teachers of the conventional program. Participants opting for Reservation Project student teaching assignments appear to be relatively liberal regarding educational views, tend to grow more conservative as they student teach for a full semester, but still manage to maintain much of their initial liberalism.

G. Changes in Participant Perceptions of Educational and Cultural Conditions Encountered by Native American Pupils:[3] Seventy-three Reservation Project participants responded prior to, and after, the student teaching experience to the Ulibarri/Centrone Scale. This scale assesses, via a five-point Likert scale, respondent perceptions of twenty-three different educational or social conditions encountered by minority groups. A score of "1" denotes a perception that a condition exists to a very low extent whereas a score of "5" represents a perception that the condition exists to a very great extent. Generally speaking, the Reservation Project participants held rather negative perceptions of the educational and social opportunities available to Navajo and Hopi youth as those participants prepared to report to Reservation sites. Mean scores for all 23 items on the pre-administration were less than 3.0. Items on which differences between pre-means and post-means were significant at $p = .005$ follow:

- extent the school meets the psychological needs of Indian children (1.770 to 2.378).
- extent to which out-of-school environment of Indian children is compatible with the school environment (1.616 to 2.068).
- extent to which Indian children are receptive to scientific interpretation of natural phenomena (1.781 to 2.315).
- extent to which Indian children are interacting and adjusting with other ethnic groups (2.151 to 2.603).
- extent to which Indian children are free from disadvantages caused by poor financial conditions of their parents (1.446-2.473).
- extent to which the school's verbal emphasis is advantageous to the following children (2.027 to 2.649).
- extent to which Indian children are achieving at grade level in school (1.919 to 1.527).
- extent to which the values of the school are the values subscribed to by Indian people's religions (1.520 to 1.986).

Although in all but one case, the means increase from pre- to post-administration; none of the means are very favorable (always less than a 3.000 scale midpoint). Furthermore, when the 23 scale items were applied to Anglo children, the mean item scores were always more than 3.000. An encouraging result of this survey was documentation of the fact that Anglo student teachers on the Reservation do perceive and admit that Native Americans have been shortchanged in the distribution of educational and social opportunities. It apparently is not easy for teachers to overlook or minimize obstacles faced by a minority group if serious study of that minority group and field experience with the group are completed.

H. Native Americans as Teacher Trainers: Quotations from Participants: Each semester project participants conclude their project assignments with some open-ended comments about their placement community and its people. Here are four quotations very representative of those comments.

"The Navajo people at my site were as diverse as the land of the Reservation itself. They all were very helpful and educational and I've learned more from interacting with them than I'd ever be able to document. With some I learned of Navajo culture, life-styles, and progress. With others I learned of friendship, fairness, and the future."

"The Native Americans at my site have been great teachers, in all facets of living. In very subtle ways, almost without notice, they have laid before me ideas and feelings for what life has to offer those who are willing to sacrifice a bit. They teach an appreciation of beauty that extends through all dimensions of a person's life and world."

"The people at my site are a blend of old and new Navajo. My friends here -- and everyone here is my friend -- are beautiful. Their humor and honesty are perpetual; their talents unsurpassed, and their eagerness to better their children through education relentless. It has been a joy to watch them, learn from them, and become a part of them for a semester."

"I'll guarantee that anyone who comes to the Reservation to student teach will go home with a whole new perspective on life."

These four education majors reflect the largely untapped potential and satisfaction inherent in teacher training activities under ethnic minority instructors and/or in ethnic minority communities.

Implications of the Study

"Mainstream" education majors can be prepared for lengthy assignments in Native American classrooms. There are many prospective teachers who are sincerely interested in studying other cultures and subsequently teaching the youth of those cultures. Native American principals, teachers, and school board members are willing to accept student teachers into their schools and to provide them with both pedagogical and cultural advice, information, and example. The preservice trainees can be required to, and will participate in, non-school community life. Native American educators report that young teachers who are immersed in the local culture do make culturally-oriented adjustments in their teaching strategies and style.

Culturally oriented projects with an intensive field component are more within the realm of university financial and qualitative capacity than often assumed. When all faculty salaries, consultant stipends, supervisory stipends, graduate student assistance, supervisory travel, and consultant travel are added, this project has operated at a cost approximately 17% higher per semester hour of credit than conventional student teaching at the same institution. Granted, student teaching is operated on a low budget. Do institutions want to spend a little more to improve multicultural teacher education? The question is one of priorities.

Follow-up data clearly indicate that these teachers, culturally prepared on Indian Reservations, are highly employable both in Native American settings and back home in mainstream settings. The positive data collected over nine years from this Native American focused project should encourage other institutions to replicate similar cultural immersion projects in Native American or other ethnic minority communities. There are many preservice teachers who recognize a need for cultural immersion and who will opt to enroll. Optimism that such students will emerge from cultural immersion projects highly satisfied seems justified. Furthermore, such efforts obviously will increase the direct input of ethnic minority people to teacher preparation.

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